

Governor Carney, Legislators Announce Major Investments in Clean Water

DOVER, Del. – Governor John Carney, House Majority Leader Valerie Longhurst and Senate President Pro Tempore David McBride joined advocates and members of the General Assembly on Tuesday to announce significant new investments in clean water across Delaware.

The [Clean Water for Delaware Act](#) – sponsored by Representative Longhurst and Senator McBride – will create a Delaware Clean Water Trust to help rebuild Delaware’s drinking water infrastructure, prevent flooding in vulnerable communities, and keep contamination out of our waterways.

The Trust will be initially funded with \$50 million in Governor Carney’s proposed Fiscal Year 2021 budget. Governor Carney will release his budget proposal on Thursday, January 30, at the Delaware Public Archives.

*“From the Brandywine Creek to the Inland Bays, we have special natural places in our state. Water is Delaware’s most basic and valuable resource, and we should protect that resource for future generations,” said **Governor Carney**. “We also need to make sure that all Delaware families have access to clean drinking water. Delawareans deserve clean water. It’s as simple as that.”*

“This is a monumental piece of legislation for Delaware that impacts a resource we simply cannot live without: water. The time to protect our waterways, support our stormwater systems and ensure clean, healthy drinking water to our residents is now,” said **House Majority Leader Valerie Longhurst**, chief sponsor of the **Clean Water for Delaware Act**. “I’ve traveled up

and down the state talking to Delawareans about how we need to protect our natural resources. This is an issue of environmental justice. Clean drinking water, safe waterways, updated infrastructure and adequate wastewater treatment are not luxuries; they are necessities. What we are doing today is taking a huge step forward toward securing our future and ensuring that our children and grandchildren have those necessities of life.”

“No community in Delaware should live in fear of polluted water and failing wastewater systems,” said **Senate President Pro Tempore David McBride**. “Yet across our great state, hundreds of our residents must be leery of the water they drink and the fish they catch. As we enter our third straight year of surpluses, the time has come to take action. I want to thank Governor John Carney for working with the General Assembly to find the revenue we need to begin addressing this problem today. Our vulnerable communities simply cannot wait any longer.”

“I want to commend Governor John Carney for taking this critical step to secure our public health, our environment, our economy, and our way of life,” said **Senator Bryan Townsend**. “Today, a large number of Delaware’s waterways have become polluted, whole communities cannot drink their tap water, and the majority of wastewater infrastructure desperately needs to be replaced. This funding is a step in the right direction.”

The Clean Water for Delaware Act will require an annual strategic planning process, and will place a new emphasis on infrastructure projects in low-income, underserved communities. In the first year, \$50 million in state funding will leverage significant federal investment in Delaware’s water quality.

“Ninety percent of Delaware’s waterways are polluted or impaired. Nearly five years ago Delaware Nature Society

founded the Clean Water Campaign as a statewide coalition to secure funding to improve Delaware's water quality. The coalition and our Water Warriors have been with us every step of the way. This new proposal is a giant step toward clean water in Delaware," said **Anne Harper, Executive Director of the Delaware Nature Society**. "Clean water is critical to Delaware's economy, environment, wildlife, food supply and public health. We look forward to working with Governor Carney, Rep. Longhurst, Senator McBride, Senator Townsend, the General Assembly and our Water Warrior volunteers to secure the proposed \$50 million in clean water funding."

"Economic development starts with infrastructure investment," said **Dave DuPlessis, President of the American Council of Engineering Companies-Delaware**. "Clean water and sustainable water infrastructure is often taken for granted and the cost of service is frequently underestimated. We are grateful that the Governor and leaders of the General Assembly recognize the value of this investment to our quality of life and the economy. Thank you to Governor Carney, Rep. Longhurst and Sen. McBride for creating a program that makes Delaware cleaner and safer while adding much needed infrastructure to our state which will have positive impacts on our economy for years to come."

"The Delaware Rural Water Association is a nonprofit trade association that works with every water and wastewater facility in the State of Delaware in maintaining compliance," said **Rick Duncan, Executive Director of the Delaware Rural Water Association**. "Having this type of resource of funding will play a vital role in our small community water systems that are having difficulty seeking those funds to support infrastructure needs and maintain compliance."

Dian Taylor, CEO and President of Artesian Water Company said "Artesian supports the Governor's Clean Water initiative. It has been our commitment for over the last hundred years and we adamantly believe that everyone has the right to clean safe

drinking water. We commend the Governor's efforts to protect our State's most essential resource."

"PDE is excited about Governor Carney's proposed Clean Water Trust initiative that will provide new resources to improve and protect Delaware's precious water resources," said **Kathy Klein, Executive Director of the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary**. "Strategic use of this funding will help to address long standing challenges and implement clean water goals and strategies in the Delaware Estuary Program's Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan."

"As a global leader in the provision of environmental services, SUEZ supports this effort to protect our most precious natural resource, clean water," said **Larry Finnicum, Director of SUEZ Delaware Operations**.

"Clean water is essential now and for future generations, and we commend Governor Carney and our state legislators who have committed to make water quality a top priority in 2020," said **Sherri Evans-Stanton, Director of the Delaware Chapter of the Sierra Club**. "Our residents, visitors and businesses deserve safe drinking water and the Governor's pledge to dedicate \$50 million in funds will provide momentum to address Delaware's clean water efforts. Given the degree to which our state economy, from agriculture to tourism, depends on clean water it is imperative to keep moving forward. Most of all, we want to thank Governor Carney for his leadership to assist communities that often lack funding necessary to clean up their water."

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